

of the U.S. Merchant Marine who served during World War II. They were rightly recognized as veterans of the Armed Forces in 1988, and the nation owes them gratitude.

The response from the Merchant Mariners: Senator LARRY E. CRAIG, *Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC.*

Misinformation is prevalent and must be rebutted when Veterans of World War II are maligned. Especially the reputations of 9,000 men who gave their lives for this country and lay for the most part in Davy Jones' locker at the bottom of the sea. There are no monuments or headstones where they lay forgotten by the millions of people who benefited from their valiant sacrifices. There are no MIA lists because the government didn't want to disclose the huge losses in the Merchant Marine during World War II.

Let's correct the Record—I am referring to the website of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. A Bill before the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 23—"A Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2005" and its companion Bill in the U.S. Senate, S. 1272 sponsored by Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska is under attack by Senator Larry Craig of Idaho. We would like to point out that this attack is full of misinformation.

Senator Craig is eloquent in his praise of the U.S. Merchant Marine but undermines their credibility with erroneous and false statements, possibly not intentional but nevertheless damaging to their efforts to establish their rights under the G.I. Bill that benefited all other Veterans of World War II.

(1) Senator Craig lists on his website as item No. 1 "The Cost of S. 1272 is considerable" assuming that just 3,000 Merchant Marine and the wives are alive today. Two things are wrong about that statement. Compared to the cost of lives lost on September 11th at over \$1,400,000 each, the cost per surviving Merchant Marine remaining life span under S. 1272 is negligible. A truer count of remaining Merchant Marine Veterans of World War II has been estimated at close to 10,000 with an estimated 3,000 wives. This has been established by the survivors in their voluntary unincorporated association of the Just Compensation Committee members. It is hard to believe that the Veterans' Affairs Committee would be hard pressed to find \$120,000,000 to fund the first year of an approximate ten year cost to compensate these Veterans for the 40 years of failure to deliver them the G.I. Bill of Rights.

(2) Senator Craig further says on his website that S. 1272 would result in additional spending on 29 other groups who have attained Veterans' status also. These 29 groups total less than 1,000 civilians under military authority, most of whom are dead today and were very far from "harm's way." The Merchant Marine had 250,000 men on armed vessels during World War II, all volunteers, who were in "harm's way" 100 percent of their service time with 81% exposed to enemy action. Senator Craig states that Congress often granted benefits to Veterans long after service. Millions and millions of dollars were granted to Veterans under the G.I. Bill of 1944. The problem is Congress has failed to pay the Merchant Marine Veterans for over 40 years.

(3) Senator Craig keeps referring to the Merchant Marine claim as similar to Medal of Honor recipients. This is not true and a distortion of facts. All other Veterans of World War II received assistance in the equivalent value of \$120,000 in 1946 dollars. Adjusted for inflation, the U.S. Government owes the Merchant Marine Veterans over \$1 million dollars each for their 40 years of neglectful lack of timely payment of benefits. No one covets the \$1,000 per month paid to

Medal of Honor recipients which the government bestows on them. A \$1,000 per month for the 78- to 88-year-old Merchant Marine Veterans of World War II with an expected 3- to 5-year remaining lifetime is a bargain settlement for our government. Most of these aged Veterans subsist on Social Security payments and Medicare struggling to survive in these days of rampant inflation.

(4) Senator Craig states in his website that "In effect, the bill seeks to grant a Veterans' benefit to individuals, not Veterans." The U.S. Congress passed the Fairness Act that recognized that World War II officially ended December 31, 1946 and those who gave service up to that date were entitled to be called Veterans.

We thank Senator Craig for stating that the members of the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II "were rightly recognized as Veterans of Armed Forces in 1988 and the nation owes them its gratitude."

I would like to refresh the recollection of the members of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate by setting forth the words of the most honored leaders of World War II as to their regard of the men who sailed the ships of the Merchant Marine.

The Merchant Mariners of World War II have been our forgotten heroes.

"The men and women who build the ships, the men who sail them, are making it possible to transport fighting men and supplies wherever they are needed to defeat the enemy. The Army is deeply indebted to these men and women for their unceasing effort to do everything in their power to hasten the day of victory."—General of the Army George C. Marshall, U.S. Army Chief of Staff.

"When final victory is ours there is no organization that will share its credit more deservedly than the Merchant Marine."—General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

"The Merchant Marine . . . has repeatedly proved its right to be considered as an integral part of our fighting team."—Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Theater.

"The men and ships of the Merchant Marine have participated in every landing operation by the United States Marine Corps from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima—and we know they will be at hand with supplies and equipment when American amphibious forces hit the beaches of Japan itself . . . We of the Marine Corps salute the men of the merchant fleet."—General A.A. Vandergrift, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps.

" . . . their contribution was just as important as that of the troops . . . During the Tripoli campaign I went down to the water-front and personally thanked the men and skippers of the merchant ships for getting through with the stuff . . ."—Field Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery.

"Because the Navy shares life and death, attack and victory, with the men of the United States Merchant Marine, we are fully aware of their contribution to the victory which must come."—Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations.

"I wish to commend to you the valor of the merchant seamen participating with us in the liberation of the Philippines. With us they have shared the heaviest enemy fire. On these islands I have ordered them off their ships and into foxholes when their ships became untenable targets of attack. At our side they have suffered in bloodshed and in death . . . They have contributed tremendously to our success. I hold no branch in higher esteem than the Merchant Marine Service."—General of the Army Douglas MacArthur.

"Our growing power on the seas is not alone a war measure. As a post-war policy,

American ships will retain the commanding position in world trade which we are now approaching our war effort . . ."—Vice Admiral E.S. Land USN (Ret.), War Shipping Administrator.

HONORING DAVE DONAHUE

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 8, 2006

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations to Dave Donahue on the occasion of his retirement from Clear Channel broadcasting. I am certain that all who have had the opportunity to work with him during his illustrious career will miss him.

Dave Donahue is a recipient of the Country Music Association's "Station of the Year Award", Billboard's "Top Ten Programmers Award", and has served on the board of directors for the Country Music Hall of Fame Awards. He became the first Agenda Chairman for the Country Radio Seminar and was its first Exhibit Hall Director. He is a commissioned Kentucky Colonel and a former legislative director for the State of Tennessee House of Representatives. In 2000, Dave was inducted into the Country Music DJ Hall of Fame.

Dave Donahue has had a long and successful career that has spanned many years of outstanding service, dedication, hard work, devotion, and love for country music. I am proud to recognize Dave Donahue for his tireless dedication to the entertainment industry. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dave on his wonderful service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR EUGENE J. MCCARTHY

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 8, 2006

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, as we resume our business I want to pause for a moment and note the death of a giant in American political history. On December 10, 2005, the Honorable Eugene Joseph McCarthy, former Representative and Senator from Minnesota, departed this life at age 89. Although many Americans, especially the young, may not know much of McCarthy's career or his role in our country's history, we are all fortunate that he chose public service and once trod the halls of this Capitol as a Member.

In the days following the Senator's death here in Washington of the effects of Parkinsonism, much has been written about him. Born on March 29, 1916, McCarthy grew up in Watkins, Minnesota, where, he once said, the culture revolved around baseball, the church, and the railroad. After earning a master's degree at the University of Minnesota, following initial diversions through study for the priesthood and a semi-professional baseball career, McCarthy became a college professor. He worked in the War Department during